

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are pending in this application. Claims 1-11 are rejected. Claims 5 and 10 are amended; claims 12-17 are added hereby.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,918,886 (Benoit et al.), Applicant has amended claim 5 to be dependent on claim 1 and respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1, and claims 2-5 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

Benoit et al. discloses an electrical power system contained within wall systems made up of prefabricated modular panels 20, 22, 24 (Fig. 1). Panels 20, 22, 24 include raceways R-1, R-2, and R-3, respectively, which contain and shield one or more multi-wire power harnesses P and J (*i.e.*, P-1, P-2)(Figs. 3-4). Raceway R-1, for instance, includes a raceway frame 60 (referenced as 60' in Fig. 3), a center web 64, and a cover 98 (referenced as 98' in Fig. 3)(Figs. 2-4). Web 64 is disposed between two covers 98, includes T-shaped slots 68 having stem sections 70, and defines two channels 62. Cover 98 includes window 220. Power harness P includes connector blocks 170 connected by conductors 172 which can run through aperture 66 of web 64, each connector block 170 having receptacles 176, 178, 182 (Fig. 4). Connector blocks 170 mount to web 64 in slots 68. An outlet connector block 212 electrically connects to connector block 170. Outlet connector block 212 includes an outwardly offset facial area 216 which inserts through window 220 of cover 98 (Fig. 3).

In contrast, claim 1 recites in part “at least one receptacle mounting bracket having a cutout at least partially surrounding and supporting said electrical receptacle, said receptacle mounting bracket having at least one attachment element connected to at least one of said modular wall panel and at least one said channel, said electrical receptacle protruding through both at least one said aperture and at least one said receptacle mounting bracket.” (Emphasis

added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed, or suggested by Benoit et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Benoit et al. discloses web 64, slot 68, outlet connector block 212, stem section 70 of slot 68, and channel 62. Benoit et al., however, fails to disclose multiple elements of claim 1. First, slot 68 of web 64 does not clearly appear at least partially to surround and support outlet connector block 212. The description in Benoit et al. does not mention this, and Fig. 3 does not appear to show this. Second, although stem section 70 appears to be defined by channel 62, stem section 70 does not appear to be connected to either a wall panel or a channel. Third, outlet connector block 212 does not appear to protrude through web 64; again, the description in Benoit et al. does not mention this, and Fig. 3 does not appear to show this. Moreover, Fig. 3 shows two outlet connector blocks 212 exploded from web 64, one on the left portion of web 64 and one on the right portion of web 64. The left portion of web 64 does not include slot 68' at the point where outlet connector block 212 would be mounted to web 64. Indeed, slot 68' on the left portion of web 64 appears to be overlaid by a connector block 170, and section 70 of that slot 68' extends to the right of that connector block 170 while outlet connector block 212 would be mounted on the left of that connector block 170.

The Office Action appears to posit that the receptacle mounting bracket of the present invention corresponds to web 64 in Benoit et al., that the cutout corresponds to slot 68, that the electrical receptacle corresponds to outlet connector block 212, that the attachment element corresponds to stem section 70 of slot 68, and that the channel corresponds to channel 62. Thus, Benoit et al. fails to disclose the following aspects of the present invention: (1) a receptacle mounting bracket having a cutout at least partially surrounding and supporting the electrical receptacle; (2) the receptacle mounting bracket having an attachment element connected to a

modular wall panel and/or a channel; and (3) an electrical receptacle protruding through the receptacle mounting bracket.

An advantage of the present invention is its design simplicity.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 1, and claims 2-5 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 6-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Benoit et al., Applicant has amended claim 10 to be dependent on claim 6 and respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 6. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 6, and claims 7-10 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

Benoit et al. is discussed above.

In contrast, claim 6 recites in part “at least one receptacle mounting bracket having a cutout at least partially surrounding and supporting said electrical receptacle, said receptacle mounting bracket having at least one attachment element configured for connection to at least one of the modular wall panel and said at least one channel, said electrical receptacle configured for protruding through both at least one said aperture and at least one said receptacle mounting bracket.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed, or suggested by Benoit et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Benoit et al. discloses web 64, slot 68, outlet connector block 212, stem section 70 of slot 68, and channel 62. Benoit et al., however, fails to disclose multiple elements of claim 6. First, slot 68 of web 64 does not clearly appear at least partially to surround and support outlet connector block 212. The description in Benoit et al. does not mention this, and Fig. 3 does not appear to show this. Second, although stem section 70 appears to be defined by channel 62, stem section 70 does not appear to be connected to either a wall panel or a channel. Third, outlet

connector block 212 does not appear to protrude through web 64; again, the description in Benoit et al. does not mention this, and Fig. 3 does not appear to show this. Moreover, Fig. 3 shows two outlet connector blocks 212 exploded from web 64, one on the left portion of web 64 and one on the right portion of web 64. The left portion of web 64 does not include slot 68' at the point where outlet connector block 212 would be mounted to web 64. Indeed, slot 68' on the left portion of web 64 appears to be overlaid by a connector block 170, and section 70 of that slot 68' extends to the right of that connector block 170 while outlet connector block 212 would be mounted on the left of that connector block 170.

The Office Action appears to posit that the receptacle mounting bracket of the present invention corresponds to web 64 in Benoit et al., that the cutout corresponds to slot 68, that the electrical receptacle corresponds to outlet connector block 212, that the attachment element corresponds to stem section 70 of slot 68, and that the channel corresponds to channel 62. Thus, Benoit et al. fails to disclose the following aspects of the present invention: (1) a receptacle mounting bracket having a cutout at least partially surrounding and supporting the electrical receptacle; (2) the receptacle mounting bracket having an attachment element connected to a modular wall panel and/or a channel; and (3) an electrical receptacle protruding through the receptacle mounting bracket.

An advantage of the present invention is its design simplicity.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 6, and claims 7-10 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Benoit et al., Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 11 is now in condition for allowance.

Benoit et al. is discussed above.

In contrast, claim 11 recites in part “placing a receptacle mounting bracket over the electrical receptacle such that a cutout at least partially surrounds and supports the electrical receptacle.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed or suggested by Benoit et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Benoit et al. discloses web 64, slot 68, and outlet connector block 212, block 212 mounted on web 64. Slot 68 of web 64 does not clearly appear at least partially to surround and support outlet connector block 212. The description in Benoit et al. does not mention this, and Fig. 3 does not appear to show this. The Office Action appears to posit that the receptacle mounting bracket of the present invention corresponds to web 64 in Benoit et al., that the cutout corresponds to slot 68, and that the electrical receptacle corresponds to outlet connector block 212. Thus, Benoit et al. fails to disclose a receptacle mounting bracket having a cutout at least partially surrounding and supporting the electrical receptacle.

An advantage of the present invention is its design simplicity.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 11 is now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 12-17 have been added to further protect the patentable subject matter of the present invention. Claim 12 recites in part “each of said at least one receptacle mounting bracket is positioned outside of each of said at least one channel and is nonsupportive relative to said plurality of electrical conductors.” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable feature. Claim 13 recites in part “each of said at least one receptacle mounting bracket couples with only one said electrical receptacle and is nonconfigured for coupling with more than one said electrical receptacle.” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable

feature. Claim 14 recites in part “wherein each of said at least one receptacle mounting bracket is positioned outside of each of said at least one channel and is nonsupportive relative to said plurality of electrical conductors.” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable feature. Claim 15 recites in part “each of said at least one receptacle mounting bracket couples with only one said electrical receptacle and is nonconfigured for coupling with more than one said electrical receptacle.” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable feature. Claim 16 recites in part “positioning each said receptacle mounting bracket outside of each of said at least one channel; and providing that each said receptacle mounting bracket is nonsupportive relative to said plurality of electrical conductors..” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable feature. Claim 17 recites in part “providing that each said receptacle mounting bracket is nonconfigured for coupling with more than one electrical receptacle.” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable feature.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicant hereby conditionally petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

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Filed electronically November 29, 2006

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